

having a magnificent panoramic view over the town and plain, and being very decent: we paid five pesetas daily. It may not be amiss to state here, that for that sum you get a room and three meals a day. Our journey to Cordova was very fatiguing, as, on account of the great heat, we travelled by night only. After three nights' rough riding, more romantic than agreeable, we arrived at Cordova. The celebrated cathedral, or *Mesquita*, is ruined by Spanish bad taste. Finished at the close of the eighth century, it was second only to Mecca for its sanctity: now it is deserted. The few masses are lost in its labyrinth of columns. An oblong, 394 feet by 356 feet, is divided into nineteen longitudinal and twenty-nine transverse aisles by them; so you can imagine what a forest of pillars it is. These columns are contributions from various places: 115 out of the lot (about 900) came from Nismes and the south of France: others were pillaged from ancient Roman temples, &c., in Spain, and from Africa as well: some were presented. They are of divers marble, porphyry and verd antique being most common. They are unequal in size and design, and generally very dumpy. The capitals have little architectural merit, numerous as they are; and the whole building has rather a heavy than a light appearance, the double arches adding to that effect. I expected a surprise, and met with a disappointment. Strange, it certainly is, but the whole interior is so low that its vastness fails to impress one, the general height not being 40 feet.

Neither the Gothic nor the Classic additions are good. Indeed the latter are without any merit. Many picturesque points may, however, be gained. There is not much else in this now poor, deserted city, a noble towngate by Herrera, and the bridge excepted: this last is massive and good, most of its arches are pointed, and their effect in sharp perspective weak and cut up. In the cathedral, the chapel of Villa Viciosa, the whilome "seat of the kalif" is very beautiful. It is of a bolder, more architectural character than the Alhambra, though just as much decorated. The tile dados, or *azulejos*, are excellent, the light coming from above well managed, and adapted for effect, like an artist's studio: the ceiling is very fine, oblong on plan, and so divided by double timbers, thin and very deep, as to form a square in centre, the interspaces of beams being filled up with hollowed honeycomb work. The large arches, north and south, are also double, supported by massive columns. These arches are formed of large cusps, and are very hold and effective. There is more what I understand by architecture here, the mouldings too are more frequent and more defined, the ornament generally is rather heavy, but often, especially in spandrels, graceful and flowing, without being too fined down. The chapel opposite has a fine and remarkable octagon ceiling. In both chapels the windows are just beneath and between the timbers of roof, which are in both cases, double, deep, and ornamented.

The Chapel del Zancarron has a magnificent gateway, ornamented in the richest style of Byzantine mosaic. The roof of this chapel consists of a single slab of marble formed into a large hollow fluted shell with the curved commencement at the entrance. The brackets are often worked with animals, and lions' heads are used as supports. All the ornament here is more Byzantine in character than I have yet seen, not so graceful as at the Alhambra, but more effective, and deeply cast.

The Gothic is not good, but very picturesque, as is usually the case with all architecture in Spain, except that of Herreras, and the modern academicians. The heads and figures are roughly cut, but very expressive, and of an Albert Durer style. Many figures in costume of the period are introduced, and are very interesting. There is a sort of rustication very common in this Gothic. It consists of squares bevelled and sunk, with sometimes ornament in centre. Twisted torus mouldings are also very common, springing from bases, and losing themselves some way up in the principal shaft: not unfrequently they have capitals, but as twisted columns they are inadmissible. The doorway beneath

the tower is Gothic, though of Arabic character: the arch is Moorish: the orange court is very handsome, and would be a delightful spot, but for the old orthodox beggars. Some portions of the old Moorish walls are interesting, and, with the palm and aloë, have a most Oriental look.

By diligence to Seville.—The first thing to see was the cathedral, and, without excuses, I will give my impression of it. It struck me as being of pretty good architecture in parts (interior), but generally very poor. Its date of construction is circa 1500. The immense columns are ribbed into stripes, their bases low and weak, and their capitals absurd, being so small as with difficulty to be seen: the ribbed mouldings of columns are often carried up into the groining above, and fade there—very bad effect. The vaulting of the choir is richly groined and worked, but not in over good taste: the principal effect of this interior is its height, the centre aisle being said to be 145 feet, and the good arrangement of light and shade: many parts are not only not worth study, but not even attention. The great Cinquecento, or Plateresque chapel, behind the High altar, is florid and bad,—when I say bad, I mean not in design or execution had a painter or sculptor done it—for as architecture, there is a great deal of fancy, invention, and spirit; but it is of a pictorial fantastic nature, and lacks that proportion, beauty, and carefulness which distinguishes the Cinquecento of Italy: to my mind, the interiors of Toledo and Burgos are vastly superior, as monuments of architecture. Some of the small exterior doors are very good, but the great whitewashed entrance is wretched. The painted windows have the reputation of being the finest in Spain, some being by Christobal Alleman (the German), A.D. 1504. Perhaps I ought to have noticed this building on account of its name, more in detail, but I have not done so, as it did not appear to me worth it.

The Giralda is so well known that I will only say it is a fine tower, very excellent, as far as the Moore's work goes, but very bad in the Christians' addition: the misproportion between the massive and rich tower, and the little, cut-up, bastardly series of lanterns above it, is strikingly bad: it may be unique, but is decidedly not a model, far from it; and still above all diminished campaniles of this kind I have ever seen, Bow Church and St. Bride's stand pre-eminent: it was built at the close of the twelfth century, but the lanterns were added in 1569.

The Lonja, or Exchange, is by Herrera (circa 1598), not much outside; like all his other works, very simple: the court is massive and handsome, but not remarkable for originality. In the Plaza San-Tomas is a remarkable brick skew arch, of Moorish workmanship. The Casa O'Lea has a very beautiful Moorish room, the ornament being in the Alhambra style, but more varied. There is a good Ajimes window, or opening, divided by a shaft, here. I would recommend the knockers of an ancient doorway at cathedral, and at Cordova, also, to those who study Saracenic work.

I only saw the outside of the Alcazar: it was just then ruined by having been repainted as a residence for the Duke of Montpensier, done in wretched taste, green and gold being lumped tastelessly about. The exterior is good, and bears a strong resemblance to parts of Venetian architecture: the side arcades have very much the same arrangement as those of the Byzantine palace, near the Rialto (on grand canal), and the windows between door and principal arch are ranged three in a row, precisely like the old Venetian palaces.

The Casa del Ayuntamiento, or town-hall, is of a rich, fanciful, Plateresque style; date on building, 1559. The principal ornaments, heads, figures, and foliage, are at least of three-quarter relief, very well and spiritedly cut: many of the Raffaelesque ornaments in pilasters, &c., are really beautiful: the niches and wreaths, too, are generally excellent: the grotesque spouts or gurgoyles of cornice have a picturesque effect; and, though against all rule, yet add decidedly to the charm of the

building.\* The houses are generally mere whitewash externally, and the streets are rather uninteresting to an antiquity hunter. In the museum is a rich choir, saved from some suppressed convent, and in the corridors some very good wood ceilings of square panels, with carved geometrical centres, and the joists moulded and worked.†

#### THE FAILURE OF WESTMINSTER AND BLACKFRIARS BRIDGES.

You have often adverted to the very unsatisfactory and unsafe condition of Westminster and Blackfriars bridges, but I am not aware that the main cause of the dilapidations so painfully evident on these once noble and costly structures has as yet been made public.

The removal of old London-bridge, with its numerous obstructive piers, and the consequent "scouring away" of the river's bed, have been elsewhere given as a reason for their present critical and sinking state, but if this supposition has truth for its basis, how happens it that neither Waterloo nor Southwark bridge—designed and erected by the late Mr. the present Sir John Rennie—has suffered a similar fate? It certainly appears to me, then, that other and more feasible explanations are to be found for the matter, and they would tend to show a lack of practical judgment in some who have conducted the thirty years' patching and repairing of the first-named bridges. What could, for instance, be more contrary to common sense—leaving scientific wisdom out of the question—than to draw the rows of inner piles which had been driven in the formation of the cofferdams around, and close to, the piers of the bridges? Why were they not (as in the case of the erection of Waterloo and Southwark bridges) cut off level with the shingle bed of the Thames? Is it not palpable that by withdrawing the roots of the massive piling from the compressed strata in which they were embedded for so long a period, a foundational disturbance seriously dangerous to the immediate stability of the piers would ensue, and that time would accomplish their ruin inevitably? J. N.

#### RESTORATION OF ST. ANNE'S CHURCH, LIMEHOUSE.

ST. ANNE'S, Limehouse, was burnt down, our readers may remember, on Good Friday, 1850, on which occasion we gave some particulars of the structure.‡ It was built, all know, from the designs of Nicholas Hawksmoor, between 1712 and 1724, at the cost of 38,000*l*.

It has been since restored under the fire direction of Mr. Hardwick and Mr. Morris Messrs. W. Cubitt and Co. being the contractors, and although not finished, is open for service. The endeavour has been, as we understand, to make the interior as nearly like what it was before as possible. The roof is new, of large span, and similar in construction, we are told, to that over the great hall at the Euston Station: the old walls remain standing. Messrs. Cubitt's contract to restore the church as it was previous to the fire is 11,000*l*. exclusive of the organ, which was built by Messrs. Gray and Davison, and cost 200*l*. The chancel window is filled with stained glass representing the Crucifixion, executed by Mr. Clutterbuck, of Stratford, at the cost of 200*l*, which was raised by subscription. This window, by the way, is a curious defiance of perspective, and can give little pleasure to those who are forced to gaze upon it. Indeed, to tell the truth, and without meaning discredit to any of the parties concerned, we could find little to admire in the new work. The enormous circle of ornamental work in the ceiling is distressingly heavy, and as for the large flat flowers, east and west of this, we should certainly advise a subscription to effect the erasure of them.

The permanent seats and other wood fittings are not yet up.

\* A view and details are given in *Examples of Architectural Art in Italy and Spain*, by Messrs. Waring and Nicolson.

† To be continued.

‡ See vol. viii., p. 137.